

RHYMES ON THE ROAD,

FABLES, ETC.

PARIS: PRINTED BY A. BELIN.

RHYMES ON THE ROAD,

FABLES, ETC.

BY THOMAS BROWN, THE YOUNGER,

SECRETARY OF THE POCO-CURANTE SOCIETY,
AND AUTHOR OF THE FUDGE FAMILY,
AND THE TWOPENNY POST-BAG.

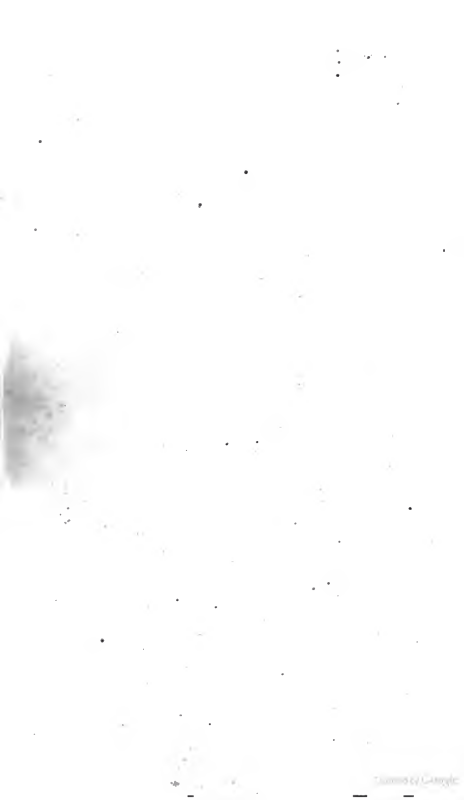


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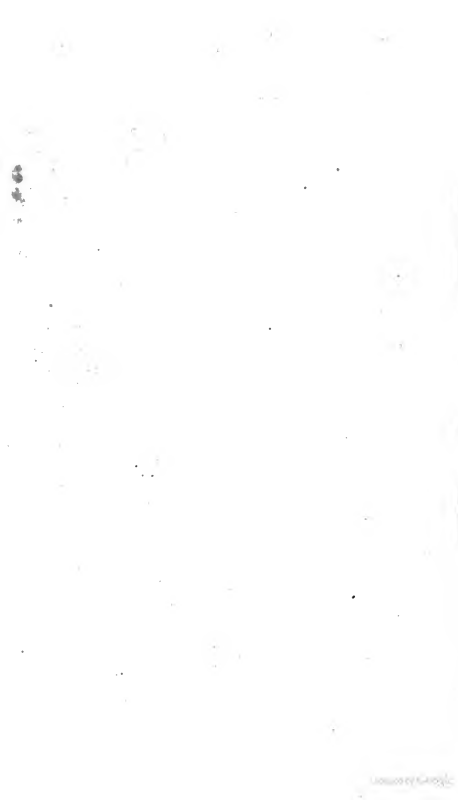
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DEDICATION.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD BYRON.

DEAR LORD BYRON,

Though this Volume should possess no other merit in your eyes than that of recalling the short time we passed together at Venice, when some of the trifles which it contains were written, you will, I am sure, receive the dedication of it with pleasure, and believe that I am,

My dear Lord,

Ever faithfully yours,

T. B.

PREFACE.

THOUGH it was the wish of the Members of the Poco-curante Society (who have lately done me the honour of electing me their Secretary) that I should prefix my name to the following Miscellany, it is but fair to them and to myself to state, that, except in the “painful pre-eminence” of being employed to transcribe their lucubrations, my claim to such a distinction in the title-page is not greater than that of any other gentleman who has contributed his share to the contents of the volume.

I had originally intended to take this opportunity of giving some account of the origin and objects of our institution, the names and characters of the different members, etc. etc.—but, as I am at present preparing for the press the first volume of the “Transactions of the Poco-curante Society,” I shall reserve for that occasion all further details

upon the subject; and content myself here with referring, for a general insight into our tenets, to a song which will be found in the "Miscellaneous Poems,"* and which is sung to us on the first day of every month, by one of our oldest members, to the tune of (as far as I can recollect, being no musician) either "Nancy Dawson," or "He stole away the Bacon."

It may be as well also to state, for the information of those critics who attack with the hope of being answered, and of being thereby brought into notice, that it is the rule of this Society to return no other answer to such assailants, than is contained in the three words, "Non curat Hippocrides" (meaning, in English, "Hippocrides does not care a fig"), which were spoken two thousand years ago by the first founder of Poco-curantism, and have ever since been adopted as the leading *dictum* of the sect.

THOMAS BROWN.

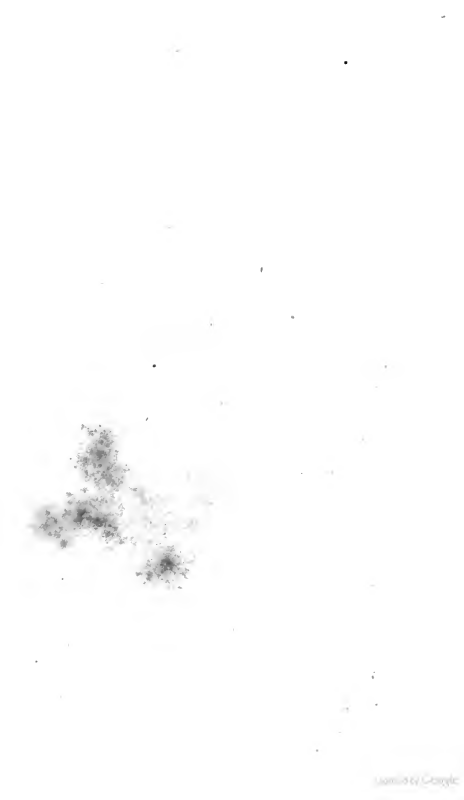
* See page 87.

RHYMES ON THE ROAD,

EXTRACTED FROM THE JOURNAL

OF A

**TRAVELLING MEMBER OF THE POCO-
CURANTE SOCIETY, 1819.**



THE Gentleman, from whose Journal the following extracts are taken, was obliged to leave England some years ago (in consequence of an unfortunate attachment, which might have ended in bringing him into Doctors' Commons), and has but very recently been able to return to England. The greater part of these poems were, as he himself mentions in his Introduction, written or composed in an old *calèche*, for the purpose of beguiling the ennui of solitary travelling; and as verses made by a gentleman in his sleep have lately been called "a *psychological* curiosity," it is to be hoped that verses made by a gentleman to keep himself awake may be honoured with some appellation equally Greek.

INTRODUCTORY RHYMES.

Different Attitudes in which Authors compose.—
Bayes, Henry Stephens, Herodotus, etc.—Writing in Bed—in the Fields.—Plato and Sir Richard Blackmore.—Fiddling with Gloves and Twigs.—Madame de Staël.—Rhyming on the Road, in an old Calèche.

WHAT various attitudes, and ways,
And tricks, we authors have in writing !
While some write sitting, some, like BAYES,
Usually stand while they're inditing.
Poets there are, who wear the floor out,
Measuring a line at every stride ;
While some, like HENRY STEPHENS, pour out
Rhymes by the dozen, while they ride.*

* *Pleraque sua carmina equitans composuit.—Paravicin. Singular.*

HERODOTUS wrote most in bed ;
And RICHERAND, a French physician,
Declares the clock-work of the head
Goes best in that reclined position.
If you consult MONTAIGNE* and PLINY on
The subject, 'tis their joint opinion
That Thought its richest harvest yields
Abroad, among the woods and fields ;
That bards, who deal in small retail,
At home may, at their counters, stop ;
But that the grove, the hill, the vale,
Are Poesy's true wholesale shop.

And truly I suspect they're right—
For, many a time, on summer eves,
Just at that closing hour of light,
When, like an eastern Prince, who leaves
For distant war his Haram bowers,
The Sun bids farewell to the flowers,
Whose heads are sunk, whose tears are flowing
'Mid all the glory of his going—

* Mes pensées dorment, si je les assis.—MONTAIGNE.

Animus eorum qui in aperto aere ambulant, attollitur.—
PLINY.

Even *I* have felt, beneath those beams,
When wand'ring through the fields alone,
Thoughts, fancies, intellectual gleams,
That, far too bright to be my own,
Seem'd lent me by the Sunny Power,
That was abroad at that still hour.

If thus I've felt, how must *they* feel,
The few, whom genuine Genius warms,
And stamps upon their soul his seal,
Graven with Beauty's countless forms;—
The few upon this earth, who seem
Born to give truth to PLATO's dream,
Since in their souls, as in a glass,
Shadows of things divine appear—
Reflections of bright forms that pass
Through fairer worlds beyond our sphere !

But this reminds me I digress;—
For PLATO, too, produced, 'tis said
(As one indeed might almost guess),
His glorious visions all in bed.*

* The only authority I know for imputing this practice to

'Twas in his carriage the sublime
 Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE used to rhyme ;
 And (if the wits don't do him wrong),
 'Twixt death and epics pass'd his time,
 Scribbling and killing all day long—
 Like Phœbus in his car, at ease,
 Now warbling forth a lofty song,
 Now murdering the young Niobes.

There was a hero 'mong the Danes,
 Who wrote, we're told, 'mid all the pains
 And horrors of exenteration,
 Nine charming odes, which, if you look,
 You'll find preserved, with a translation,
 By BARTHOLINUS in his book.*

Plato and Herodotus, is a Latin poem by M. de Valois on his Bed, in which he says:

Lucifer Herodotum vidit Vesperque cubantem,
 Desedit totos heic Plato sæpe dies.

* Eâdem curâ nec minores inter cruciatus animam infelicem agenti fuit Asbiorno Prudæ Danico heroi, cum Brusio ipsum, intestina extrahens, immaniter torqueret, tunc enim novem carmina cecinit, etc.—BARTHOLIN. *de causis contempt. mort.*

In short, 'twere endless to recite
The various modes in which men write.
Some wits are only in the mind

When beaus and belles* are round them prat-
ing ;

Some, when they dress for dinner, find
Their muse and valet both in waiting,
And manage, at the self-same time,
To adjust a neckcloth and a rhyme.

Some bards there are who cannot scribble
Without a glove, to tear or nibble,
Or a small twig to whisk about—

As if the hidden founts of Fancy,
Like those of water, were found out

By mystic tricks of rhabdomancy.

Such was the little feathery wand*

That, held for ever in the hand

Of her who won and wore the crown

Of female genius in this age, -

Seem'd the conductor, that drew down

Those words of lightning on her page.

* Made of paper, twisted up like a fan or feather.

As for myself—to come at last,
To the odd way in which *I* write—
Having employed these few months past
Chiefly in travelling, day and night,
I've got into the easy mode,
You see, of rhyming on the road—
Making a way-bill of my pages,
Counting my stanzas by my stages—
'Twixt lays and *re-lays* no time lost—
In short, in two words, *writing post*.
My verses, I suspect, not ill
Resembling the crazed vehicle
(An old *calèche*, for which a villain
Charged me some twenty Naps at Milan)
In which I wrote them—patch'd-up things,
On weak, but rather easy, springs,
Jingling along, with little in 'em,
And (where the road is not so rough,
Or deep, or lofty, as to spin 'em
Down precipices) safe enough.—
Too ready to take fire, I own,
And *then*, too, nearest a break-down ;
But, for my comfort, hung so low,
I haven't, in falling, far to go.—

With all this, light, and swift, and airy,
And carrying (which is best of all)
But little for the *Doganieri**
Of the Reviews to overhaul.

* Custom-house officers.



RHYMES ON THE ROAD.

EXTRACT I.

Geneva.

View of the Lake of Geneva from the Jura.—
Anxious to reach it before the Sun went down.
—Obliged to proceed on Foot.—Alps.—Mont
Blanc.—Effect of the Scene.*

'Twas late—the sun had almost shone
His last and best, when I ran on,
Anxious to reach that splendid view
Before the day-beams quite withdrew ;
And feeling as all feel, on first

Approaching scenes where, they are told,
Such glories on their eyes shall burst
As youthful bards in dreams behold.

* Between Vattay and Gex.

'Twas distant yet, and, as I ran,
Full often was my wistful gaze
Turn'd to the sun, who now began
To call in all his out-post rays,
And form a denser march of light,
Such as beseems a hero's flight.
Oh, how I wish'd for JOSHUA's power,
To stay the brightness of that hour!
But no—the sun still less became,
Diminish'd to a speck, as splendid
And small as were those tongues of flame,
That on th' Apostles' heads descended!

'Twas at this instant—while there glow'd
This last, intensest gleam of light—
Suddenly, through the opening road,
The valley burst upon my sight!
That glorious valley, with its lake,
And Alps on Alps in clusters swelling,
Mighty, and pure, and fit to make
The ramparts of a Godhead's dwelling!

I stood entranced and mute—as they
Of ISRAEL think th' assembled world

Will stand upon that awful day,
 When the Ark's Light, aloft unfurl'd,
 Among the opening clouds shall shine,
 Divinity's own radiant sign !
 Mighty MONT BLANC ! thou wert to me,
 That minute, with thy brow in Heaven,
 As sure a sign of Deity
 As e'er to mortal gaze was given.
 Nor ever, were I destined yet
 To live my life twice o'er again,
 Can I the deep-felt awe forget—
 The ecstasy that thrill'd me then !

'Twas all that consciousness of power,
 And life, beyond this mortal hour ;—
 Those mountings of the soul within
 At thoughts of Heaven—as birds begin
 By instinct in the cage to rise,
 When near their time for change of skies—
 That proud assurance of our claim
 To rank among the Sons of Light,
 Mingled with shame—oh, bitter shame !—
 At having risk'd that splendid right,

For aught that earth, through all its range
Of glories, offers in exchange!

'Twas all this, at the instant brought,
Like breaking sunshine, o'er my thought—

'Twas all this, kindled to a glow
Of sacred zeal, which, could it shine

Thus purely ever—man might grow,

Even upon earth, a thing divine,
And be once more the creature made
To walk unstain'd th' Elysian shade!

No—never shall I lose the trace
Of what I've felt in this bright place.

And, should my spirit's hope grow weak,

Should I, oh God! e'er doubt thy power,
This mighty scene again I'll seek,

At the same calm and glowing hour,
And here, at the sublimest shrine

That Nature ever rear'd to Thee,
Rekindle all that hope divine,
And *feel* my immortality!

EXTRACT II.

Venice.

The Fall of Venice not to be lamented.—Former Glory.—Expedition against Constantinople.—Giustinianis. — Republic. — Characteristics of the old Government.—Golden Book.—Brazen Mouths. — Spies. — Dungeons. — Present Desolation.

MOURN not for VENICE—let her rest
 In ruin, 'mong those States unblest'd,
 Beneath whose gilded hoofs of pride,
 Where'er they trampled, Freedom died.
 No—let us keep our tears for them,
 Where'er they pine, whose fall hath been
 Not from a blood-stain'd diadem,
 Like that which deck'd this ocean-queen,
 But from high daring in the cause
 Of human Rights—the only good
 And blessed strife, in which man draws
 His powerful sword on land or flood.

Mourn not for VENICE—though her fall
Be awful, as if Ocean's wave
Swept o'er her—she deserves it all,
And Justice triumphs o'er her grave.
Thus perish every King and State
That run the guilty race she ran,
Strong but in fear, and only great
By outrage against God and man !

True, her high spirit is at rest,
And all those days of glory gone,
When the world's waters, east and west,
Beneath her white-wing'd commerce shone ;
When, with her countless barks she went
To meet the Orient Empire's might,*
And the GIUSTINIANIS sent
Their hundred heroes to that fight.†

Vanish'd are all her pomps, 'tis true,
But mourn them not—for vanish'd, too

* Under the Doge Michaeli, in 1171.

† “ La famille entière des Justiniani, l'une des plus illustres de Venise, voulut marcher toute entière dans cette expédition ; elle fournit cent combattans ; c'était renouveler l'exemple d'une illustre famille de Rome ; le même malheur les attendait.”—*Histoire de Venise*, par DARU.

(Thanks to that Power, who, soon or late,
Hurls to the dust the guilty Great),
Are all the outrage, falsehood, fraud,
The chains, the rapine, and the blood,
That fill'd each spot, at home, abroad,
Where the Republic's standard stood!

Desolate VENICE! when I track
Thy haughty course through centuries back,—
Thy ruthless power, obey'd but cursed,—
The stern machinery of thy State,
Which hatred would, like steam, have burst,
Had stronger fear not chill'd even hate;
Thy perfidy, still worse than aught
Thy own unblushing SARPI* taught,—
Thy friendship, which, o'er all beneath
Its shadow, rain'd down dews of death,—†

* The celebrated Fra Paolo. The collection of maxims which this bold monk drew up at the request of the Venetian Government, for the guidance of the Secret Inquisition of State, are so atrocious as to seem rather an over-charged satire upon despotism, than a system of policy seriously inculcated, and but too readily and constantly pursued.

† Conduct of Venice towards her allies and dependencies, particularly to unfortunate Padua.—Fate of Francesco Carrara, for which see DARU, vol. ii. p. 141.

Thy Oligarchy's Book of Gold,
 Shut against humble Virtue's name,*
 But open'd wide for slaves who sold
 Their native land to thee and shame,—†
 Thy all-pervading host of spies,
 Watching o'er every glance and breath,
 Till men look'd in each other's eyes,
 To read their chance of life or death,—
 Thy laws, that made a mart of blood,
 And legalized th' assassin's knife,—§
 Thy sunless cells beneath the flood,
 And racks, and Leads** that burn out life;—

* "A l'exception des trente citadins admis au grand conseil pendant la guerre de Chiozzi, il n'est pas arrivé une seule fois que les talens ou les services aient paru à cette noblesse orgueilleuse des titres suffisans pour s'asseoir avec elle."—DARU.

† Among those admitted to the honour of being inscribed in the *Libro d'Oro* were some families of Brescia, Treviso, and other places, whose only claim to that distinction was the zeal with which they prostrated themselves and their country at the feet of the republic.

§ By the infamous statutes of the State Inquisition, not only was assassination recognized as a regular mode of punishment, but this secret power over life was delegated to their minions at a distance, with nearly as much facility as a licence is given under the game laws of England. The only restriction seems to have been the necessity of applying for a new certificate, after every individual exercise of the power.

** "Les prisons des plombs; c'est-à-dire ces fournaies ardentes qu'on avait distribuées en petites cellules sous les terrasses qui couvrent le palais."

When I review all this, and see
 What thou art sunk and crush'd to now;
 Each harpy maxim, hatch'd by thee,
 Return'd to roost on thy own brow,—
 Thy Nobles, towering once aloft,
 Now sunk in chains—in chains, that have
 Not even that borrow'd grace, which oft
 The master's fame sheds o'er the slave,
 But are as mean as e'er were given
 To stiff-neck'd Pride by angry Heaven—
 I feel the moral vengeance sweet,
 And, smiling o'er the wreck, repeat—
 “ Thus perish every King and State,
 “ That tread the steps which VENICE trod,
 “ Strong but in fear, and only great
 “ By outrage against man and God!”

EXTRACT III.

Venice.

*L——d B——'s Memoirs, written by himself.—
Reflections, when about to read them.*

LET me, a moment—ere with fear and hope
Of gloomy, glorious things, these leaves I ope—
As one, in fairy tale, to whom the key
Of some enchanter's secret halls is given,
Doubts, while he enters, slowly, tremblingly,
If he shall meet with shapes from hell or heaven—
Let me, a moment, think what thousands live
O'er the wide earth this instant, who would give,
Gladly, whole sleepless nights to bend the brow
Over these precious leaves, as I do now.
How all who know—and where is he unknown?
To what far region have his songs not flown,
Like PSAPHON's birds,* speaking their master's name,
In every language syllabled by Fame?—

* Psaphon, in order to attract the attention of the world, taught multitudes of birds to speak his name, and then let them fly away in various directions; whence the proverb, "*Psaphonis aves.*"

How all, who've felt the various spells combined
 Within the circle of that splendid mind,
 Like powers, derived from many a star, and met
 Together in some wondrous amulet,
 Would burn to know when first the Light awoke
 In his young soul,—and if the gleams that broke
 From that Aurora of his genius, raised
 More bliss or pain in those on whom they blazed—
 Would love to trace th' unfolding of that power,
 Which hath grown ampler, grander, every hour;
 And feel, in watching o'er its first advance,
 As did th' Egyptian traveller,* when he stood
 By the young Nile, and fathom'd with his lance
 The first small fountains of that mighty flood.

They, too, who, 'mid the scornful thoughts that
 dwell

In his rich fancy, tinging all its streams,
 As if the Star of Bitterness, which fell
 On earth of old, and touch'd them with its beams,
 Can track a spirit, which, though driven to hate,
 From Nature's hands came kind, affectionate;

* Bruce.

And which, even now, struck as it is with blight,
Comes out, at times, in love's own native light—
How gladly all, who've watch'd these struggling
rays

Of a bright, ruin'd spirit through his lays,
Would here inquire, as from his own frank lips,
What desolating grief, what wrongs had driven
That noble nature into cold eclipse—

Like some fair orb that, once a sun in Heaven,
And born, not only to surprise, but cheer
With warmth and lustre all within its sphere,
Is now so quench'd, that, of its grandeur, lasts
Nought but the wide cold shadow which it casts !

Eventful volume ! whatsoe'er the change
Of scene and clime—th' adventures, bold and
strange—

The griefs—the frailties, but too frankly told—
The loves, the feuds thy pages may unfold,
If Truth with half so prompt a hand unlocks

His virtues as his failings—we shall find
The record there of friendships, held like rocks,
And enmities, like sun-touch'd snow, resign'd—

Of fealty, cherish'd without change or chill,
 In those who served him, young, and serve him still—
 Of generous aid, given with that noiseless art
 Which wakes not pride, to many a wounded heart—
 Of acts—but, no—not from himself must aught
 Of the bright features of his life be sought.
 While they who court the world, like MILTON's cloud,*
 "Turn forth their silver lining" on the crowd,
 This gifted Being wraps himself in night,
 And, keeping all that softens, and adorns,
 And gilds his social nature, hid from sight,
 Turns but its darkness on a world he scorns.

* ————— "Did a sable cloud.

"Turn forth her silver lining on the night."

Comus.

EXTRACT IV.

Venice.

*The English to be met with every where.—Alps
and Threadneedle-street.—The Simplon and the
Stocks.—Rage for travelling.—Blue-Stockings
among the Wahabees.—Parasols and Pyramids.
—Mrs. Hopkins and the Wall of China.*

AND is there then no earthly place
Where we can rest, in dream Elysian,
Without some cursed, round English face,
Popping up near, to break the vision?

'Mid northern lakes, 'mid southern vines,
Unholy cits we're doom'd to meet;
Nor highest Alps nor Apennines
Are sacred from Threadneedle-street!

If up the Simplon's path we wind,
Fancying we leave this world behind,
Such pleasant sounds salute one's ear
As—"Baddish news from 'Change, my dear—

“ The Fupds—(pew, curse this ugly hill !)
 “ Are lowering fast—(what ! higher still ?)—
 “ And—(zooks, we’re mounting up to Heaven !)—
 “ Will soon be down to sixty-seven.”

Go where we may—rest where we will,
 Eternal London haunts us still.

The trash of Almack’s or Fleet-Ditch—
 And scarce a pin’s head difference *which*—
 Mixes, though even to Greece we run,
 With every rill from Helicon !

And, if this rage for travelling lasts,
 If Cockneys, of all sects and castes,
 Old maidens, aldermen, and squires,
Will leave their puddings and coal fires,
 To gape at things in foreign lands
 No soul among them understands—

If Blues desert their coteries,
 To show off ’mong the Wahabees—

If neither sex nor age controls,

Nor fear of Mamelukes forbids
 Young ladies, with pink parasols,
 To glide among the Pyramids—*

* It was pink *spencers*, I believe, that the imagination of the French traveller conjured up.

Why, then, farewell all hope to find
A spot that's free from London-kind !
Who knows, if to the West we roam,
But we may find some *Blue* " at home "

Among the *Blacks* of Carolina—
Or, flying to the Eastward, see
Some Mrs. HOPKINS, taking tea
And toast upon the Wall of China !

EXTRACT V.

Florence.

No—'tis not the region where love's to be found—
They have bosoms that sigh, they have glances that
rove,
They have language a Sappho's own lip might resound,
When she warbled her best—but they've nothing like
Love.

Nor is it that *sentiment* only they want,
Which Heaven for the pure and the tranquil hath
made—
Calm, wedded affection, that home-rooted plant,
Which sweetens seclusion, and smiles in the shade ;

That feeling, which, after long years are gone by,
 Remains like a portrait we've sat for in youth,
 Where, even though the flush of the colours may fly,
 The features still live in their first smiling truth ;

That union, where all that in Woman is kind,
 With all that in Man most ennoblingly towers,
 Grow wreathed into one—like the column, combined
 Of the *strength* of the shaft and the capital's *flowers*.

Of this—bear ye witness, ye wives, every where,
 By the ARNO, the Po, by all ITALY'S streams—
 Of this heart-wedded love, so delicious to share,
 Not a husband hath even one glimpse in his dreams.

But it is not this, only—born, full of the light
 Of a sun, from whose fount the luxuriant festoons
 Of these beautiful valleys drink lustre so bright,
 That, beside him, our suns of the north are but moons !

We might fancy, at least, like their climate they burn'd,
 And that Love, though unused, in this region of spring,
 To be thus to a tame Household Deity turn'd,
 Would yet be all soul, when abroad on the wing.

And there *may* be, there *are* those explosions of heart,
Which burst, when the senses have first caught the
flame ;

Such fits of the blood as those climates impart,
Where Love is a sun-stroke that maddens the frame.

But that Passion, which springs in the depth of the soul,
Whose beginnings are virginly pure as the source
Of some mountainous rivulet, destined to roll
As a torrent, ere long, losing peace in its course—

A course, to which Modesty's struggle but lends
A more head-long descent, without chance of recal ;
But which Modesty, even to the last edge attends,
And, at length, throws a halo of tears round its fall !

This exquisite Passion—ay, exquisite, even
In the ruin its madness too often hath made,
As it keeps, even then, a bright trace of the heaven,
The heaven of Virtue, from which it has stray'd—

This entireness of love, which can only be found
Where Woman, like something that's holy, watch'd
over,

And fenced, from her childhood, with purity round,
Comes, body and soul, fresh as Spring, to a lover!

Where not an eye answers, where not a hand presses,
Till spirit with spirit in sympathy move;
And the Senses, asleep in their sacred recesses,
Can only be reach'd through the Temple of Love!

This perfection of Passion—how *can* it be found,
Where the mysteries Nature hath hung round the
tie

By which souls are together attracted and bound,
Are laid open, for ever, to heart, ear, and eye—

Where nought of those innocent doubts can exist,
That ignorance, even than knowledge more bright,
Which circles the young, like the morn's sunny mist,
And curtains them round in their own native light—

Where Experience leaves nothing for Love to reveal,
Or for Fancy, in visions, to gleam o'er the thought,
But the truths which, alone, we would die to conceal
From the maiden's young heart, are the *only* ones
taught—

Oh no—'tis not here, howsoever we're given,
 Whether purely to Hymen's *one* planet we pray,
 Or adore, like Sabæans, each light of Love's heaven,
 Here *is* not the region to fix or to stray;

For, faithless in wedlock, in gallantry gross,
 Without honour to guard, or reserve to restrain,
What have they a husband can mourn as a loss?—
What have they a lover can prize as a gain?

EXTRACT VI.

Rome.

*Reflections on reading De Cerceau's Account of the
 Conspiracy of Rienzi, in 1347.—The Meeting of
 the Conspirators on the Night of the 19th of May.
 —Their Procession in the Morning to the Capitol.
 —Rienzi's Speech.*

'Twas a proud moment—even to hear the words
 Of Truth and Freedom 'mid these temples breathed,
 And see, once more, the Forum shine with swords,
 In the Republic's sacred name unsheathed—

That glimpse, that vision of a brighter day
 For his dear ROME, must to a Roman be—
 Short as it was—worth ages past away
 In the dull lapse of hopeless slavery.

'Twas on a night of May—beneath that moon
 Which had through many an age seen Time untune
 The strings of this Great Empire, till it fell
 From his rude hands, a broken, silent shell—
 The sound of the church clock,* near ADRIAN's Tomb,
 Summon'd the warriors, who had risen for ROME,
 To meet unarm'd, with nought to watch them there
 But God's own Eye, and pass the night in prayer.
 Holy beginning of a holy cause,
 When heroes, girt for Freedom's combat, pause
 Before high Heaven, and, humble in their might,
 Call down its blessing on that awful fight.

At dawn, in arms, went forth the patriot band,
 And, as the breeze, fresh from the TIBER, fann'd

* It is not easy to discover what church is meant by Du Cerceau here:—"Il fit crier dans les rues de Rome, à son de trompe, que chacun eût à se trouver, sans armes, la nuit du lendemain, dix-neuvième, dans l'église du château de Saint-Ange, au son de la cloche, afin de pourvoir au Bon État."

Their gilded gonfalons, all eyes could see

The palm-tree there, the sword, the keys of Heaven—*
Types of the justice, peace, and liberty,

That were to bless them when their chains were riven.
On to the Capitol the pageant moved,

While many a Shade of other times, that still
Around that grave of grandeur sighing roved,

Hung o'er their footsteps up the Sacred Hill,
And heard its mournful echoes, as the last
High-minded heirs of the Republic pass'd.

'Twas then that thou, their Tribune (name which brought
Dreams of lost glory to each patriot's thought),
Didst, from a spirit Rome in vain shall seek
To call up in her sons again, thus speak :—

“ ROMANS ! look round you—on this sacred place

“ There once stood shrines, and gods, and godlike
men—

“ What see you now ? what solitary trace

“ Is left of all that made ROME's glory then ?

“ The shrines are sunk, the Sacred Mount bereft

“ Even of its name—and nothing now remains

* For a description of these banners, see Notes.

- “ But the deep memory of that glory, left
 “ To whet our pangs and aggravate our chains !
 “ But *shall* this be ?—our sun and sky the same,
 “ Treading the very soil our fathers trode,
 “ What withering curse hath fallen on soul and frame,
 “ What visitation hath there come from God,
 “ To blast our strength and rot us into slaves,
 “ *Here*, on our great forefathers’ glorious graves ?
 “ It cannot be—rise up, ye Mighty Dead,
 “ If we, the living, are too weak to crush
 “ These tyrant priests, that o’er your empire tread,
 “ Till all but ROMANS at ROME’s tameness blush !

 “ Happy PALMYRA ! in thy desert domes,
 “ Where only date-trees sigh and serpents hiss ;
 “ And thou, whose pillars are but silent homes
 “ For the stork’s brood, superb PERSEPOLIS !
 “ Thrice happy both that your extinguish’d race
 “ Have left no embers—no half-living trace—
 “ No slaves, to crawl around the once-proud spot,
 “ Till past renown in present shame’s forgot ;
 “ While ROME, the Queen of all, whose very wrecks,
 “ If lone and lifeless through a desert hurl’d,

- " Would wear more true magnificence than decks
 " Th' assembled thrones of all th' existing world—
 " ROME, ROME alone, is haunted, stain'd, and cursed,
 " Through every spot her princely TIBER laves,
 " By living human things—the deadliest, worst,
 " This earth engenders—tyrants and their slaves !
 " And we*—oh shame !—we, who have ponder'd o'er
 " The patriot's lesson and the poet's lay ;
 " Have mounted up the streams of ancient lore,
 " Tracking our country's glories all the way—
 " Even we have tamely, basely kiss'd the ground
 " Before that Papal Power, that Ghost of Her,
 " The World's Imperial Mistress—sitting, crown'd
 " And ghastly, on her mouldering sepulchre ! †

* The fine *Cânzone* of Petrarch, beginning "*Spirto gentil*," is supposed, by Voltaire and others, to have been addressed to Rienzi ; but there is much more evidence of its having been written, as Ginguené asserts, to the young Stephen Colonna, on his being created a Senator of Rome. That Petrarch, however, was filled with high and patriotic hopes by the first measures of this extraordinary man, appears from one of his letters, quoted by Du Cerceau, where he says : "*Pour tout dire, en un mot, j'atteste, non comme lecteur, mais comme témoin oculaire, qu'il nous a ramené la justice, la paix, la bonne foi, la sécurité, et tous les autres vestiges de l'âge d'or.*"

† See Note.

" But this is past—too long have lordly priests
 " And priestly lords led us, with all our pride
 " Withering about us—like devoted beasts,
 " Dragg'd to the shrine, with faded garlands tied.
 " 'Tis o'er—the dawn of our deliverance breaks!
 " Up from his sleep of centuries awakes
 " The Genius of the Old Republic, free
 " As first he stood, in chainless majesty,
 " And sends his voice through ages yet to come,
 " Proclaiming ROME, ROME, ROME, Eternal ROME!"

EXTRACT VII.

Rome.

*Mary Magdalen.—Her Story.—Numerous Pic-
 . tures of her.—Correggio.—Guido.—Raphael,
 etc.—Canova's two exquisite Statues.—The So-
 mariva Magdalen.—Ch-ntr-y's Admiration of
 Canova's Works.*

No wonder, MARY, that thy story
 Touches all hearts—for there we see
 The soul's corruption and its glory,
 Its death and life, combined in thee.

From the first moment, when we find
Thy spirit, haunted by a swarm
Of dark desires, which had inshrined
Themselves, like demons, in thy form,
Till when, by touch of Heaven set free,
Thou cam'st, with those bright locks of gold
(So oft the gaze of BETHANY),
And, covering in their precious fold
Thy Saviour's feet, didst shed such tears
As paid, each drop, the sins of years!—
Thence on, through all thy course of love
To Him, thy Heavenly Master,—Him
Whose bitter death-cup from above
Had yet this sweetening round the brim,
That woman's faith and love stood fast
And fearless by him to the last!
Till—bless'd reward for truth like thine!—
Thou wert, of all, the chosen one,
Before whose eyes that Face Divine,
When risen from the dead, first shone,
That thou mightst see how, like a cloud,
Had pass'd away its mortal shroud,
And make that bright revelation known
To hearts less trusting than thy own—

All is affecting, cheering, grand ;
 The kindest record ever given,
 Even under God's own kindly hand,
 Of what Repentance wins from Heaven !

No wonder, MARY, that thy face,
 In all its touching light of tears,
 Should meet us in each holy place,
 Where Man before his God appears,
 Hopeless—were he not taught to see
 All hope in Him, who pardon'd thee !
 No wonder that the painter's skill
 Should oft have triumph'd in the power
 Of keeping' thee most lovely still
 Throughout thy sorrow's bitterest hour—
 That soft CORREGGIO should diffuse
 His melting shadows round thy form ;
 That GUIDO's pale unearthly hues
 Should, in portraying thee, grow warm ;
 That all—from the ideal, grand,
 Inimitable Roman hand,
 Down to the small, enamelling touch
 Of smooth CARLINO—should delight

In picturing her who "loved so much,"
And was, in spite of sin, so bright!

But, MARY, 'mong the best essays
Of Genius and of Art to raise
A semblance of those weeping eyes—
A vision, worthy of the sphere
Thy faith has given thee in the skies,
And in the hearts of all men here—
Not one hath equall'd, hath come nigh
CANOVA's fancy; oh, not one
Hath made thee feel, and live, and die
In tears away, as *he* hath done,
In those bright images, more bright
With true expression's breathing light
Than ever yet beneath the stroke
Of chisel into life awoke!
The one,* pourtraying what thou wert
In thy first grief, while yet the flower

* This statue is one of the last works of Canova, and was not yet in marble when I left Rome. The other, which seems to prove, in contradiction to very high authority, that expression, of the intensest kind, is fully within the sphere of sculpture, was executed many years ago, and is in the possession of the Count Somariva, at Paris.

Of those young beauties was unhurt
 By sorrow's slow consuming power,
 And mingling earth's luxurious grace
 With Heaven's subliming thoughts so well,
 We gaze, and know not in *which* place
 Such beauty most was form'd to dwell!—
 The other, as thou look'dst when years
 Of fasting, penitence, and tears
 Had worn thee down—and ne'er did Art
 With half such mental power express
 The ruin which a breaking heart
 Spreads, by degrees, o'er loveliness!
 Those wasted arms, that keep the trace,
 Even now, of all their youthful grace—
 Those tresses, of thy charms the last
 Whose pride forsook thee, wildly cast—
 Those features, even in fading worth •
 The freshest smiles to others given,
 And those sunk eyes, that see not earth,
 But whose last looks are full of Heaven!
 Wonderful artist! praise like mine—
 Though springing from a soul that feels

Deep worship of those works divine,
Where Genius all his light reveals—
Is little to the words that came
From him, thy peer in art and fame,
Whom I have known, by day, by night,
Hang o'er thy marble with delight,
And, while his lingering hand would steal
O'er every grace the taper's rays,*
Give thee, with all the generous zeal
Such master-spirits only feel,
That best of fame—a rival's praise !

* Canova always shows his fine statue, the Venere Vincitrice, by the light of a small candle.

EXTRACT VIII.

Les Charmettes.

A Visit to the House where Rousseau lived with Madame de Warrens.—Their Ménage.—Its Grossness.—Claude Anet.—Reverence with which the Spot is now visited.—Absurdity of this blind Devotion to Fame.—Feelings excited by the Beauty and Seclusion of the Scene.—Disturbed by its Associations with Rousseau's History.—Impostures of Men of Genius.—Their Power of mimicking all the best Feelings, Love, Independence, etc.

STRANGE power of Genius, that can throw
O'er all that's vicious, weak, and low,
Such magic lights, such rainbow dyes,
As dazzle even the steadiest eyes!

About a century since, or near,
A middle-aged Madame lived here,
With character, even worse than most
Such middle-aged Madames can boast.

Her footman was—to gloss it over
With the most gentle term—her lover ;
Nor yet so jealous of the truth
And charms of this impartial fair,
As to deny a pauper youth,
Who join'd their snug *ménage*, his share.
And there they lived, this precious three,
With just as little sense or notion
Of what the world calls decency,
As hath the sea-calf in the ocean.
And, doubtless, 'mong the grave, and good,
And gentle of their neighbourhood,
If known at all, they were but known
As strange, low people, low and bad—
Madame, herself, to footmen prone,
And her young pauper, all but mad.
Who could have thought this very spot
Would, one day, be a sort of shrine,
Where—all its grosser taints forgot,
Or gilt by Fancy till they shine—
Pilgrims would meet, from many a shore,
To trace each mouldering chamber o'er ;
Young bards to dream of virtuous fame,
Young maids to lisp DE WARRENS' name,

And mellow spinsters—of an age
 Licensed to read JEAN JACQUES's page—
 To picture all those blissful hours
 He pass'd in these sequester'd bowers,
 With his dear Maman and his flowers!
 Spinsters, who—if, from glowing heart
 Or erring head, some living maid
 Had wander'd even the thousandth part
 Of what this worthy Maman stray'd—
 Would bridle up their virtuous chins
 In horror at her sin of sins,
 And—could their chaste eyes kill with flashes—
 Frown the fair culprit into ashes!

'Tis too absurd—'tis weakness, shame,
 This low prostration before Fame—
 This casting down, beneath the car
 Of Idols, whatsoe'er they are,
 Life's purest, holiest decencies,
 To be career'd o'er, as they please.
 No—let triumphant Genius have
 All that his loftiest wish can crave.
 If he be worshipp'd, let it be
 For attributes, his noblest, first—

Not with that base idolatry,
Which sanctifies his last and worst.

I may be cold—may want that glow
Of high romance, which bards should know ;
That holy homage, which is felt
In treading where the great have dwelt—
This reverence, whatsoe'er it be,

I fear, I feel, I have it not,
For here, at this still hour, to me
The charms of this delightful spot—
Its calm seclusion from the throng,
From all the heart would fain forget—

This narrow valley, and the song
Of its small murmuring rivulet—
The flitting to and fro of birds,
Tranquil and tame as they were once
In Eden, ere the startling words

Of man disturb'd their orisons !—
Those little, shadowy paths, that wind
Up the hill side, with fruit-trees lined,
And lighted only by the breaks
The gay wind in the foliage makes,

Or vistas here and there, that ope
 Through weeping willows, like the snatches
 Of far-off scenes of light, which Hope,
 Even through the shade of sadness, catches!—
 All this, which—could I once but lose
 The memory of those vulgar ties,
 Whose grossness all the heavenliest hues
 Of Genius can no more disguise
 Than the sun's beams can do away
 The filth of fens o'er which they play—
 This scene, which would have fill'd my heart
 With thoughts of all that happiest is—
 Of Love, where self hath only part,
 As echoing back another's bliss—
 Of solitude, secure and sweet,
 Beneath whose shade the Virtues meet;
 Which, while it shelters, never chills
 Our sympathies with human woe,
 But keeps them, like sequester'd rills,
 Purer and fresher in their flow—
 Of happy days, that share their beams
 'Twixt quiet mirth and wise employ—
 Of tranquil nights, that give in dreams
 The moonlight of the morning's joy!—

All this my heart could dwell on here,
But for those hateful memories near,
Those sordid truths, that cross the track
Of each sweet thought, and drive them back
Full into all the mire, and strife,
And vanities of that man's life,
Who, more than all that e'er have glow'd
 With Fancy's flame (and it was *his*,
If ever given to mortal) show'd
 What an impostor Genius is—
How with that strong, mimetic art,
 Which is its life and soul, it takes
All shapes of thought, all hues of heart,
 Nor feels, itself, one throb it wakes—
How like a gem its light may smile
 O'er the dark path, by mortals trod,
Itself as mean a worm, the while,
 As crawls along the sullying sod—
What sensibility may fall
 From its false lip, what plans to bless,
While home, friends, kindred, country, all,
 Lie waste beneath its selfishness—
How, with the pencil hardly dry
 From colouring up such scenes of love

And beauty, as make young hearts sigh,
 And dream, and think through Heaven they
 rove,
 They, who can thus describe and move,
 The very workers of these charms,
 Nor seek, nor ask a Heaven, above
 Some Maman's or Theresa's arms!

How all, in short, that makes the boast
 Of their false tongues, they want the most;
 And while, with Freedom on their lips,
 Sounding her timbrels, to set free
 This bright world, labouring in th' eclipse
 Of priestcraft and of slavery,
 They may, themselves, be slaves as low
 As ever lord or patron made,
 To blossom in his smile, or grow,
 Like stunted brushwood, in his shade!

Out on the craft—I'd rather be
 One of those hinds that round me tread,
 With just enough of sense to see
 The noon-day sun that's o'er my head,

Than thus, with high-built genius cursed,
That hath no heart for its foundation,
Be all, at once, that's brightest—worst—
Sublimest—meanest in creation !

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

*Thy perfidy, even worse than aught
Thy own unblushing SARPIS taught.*

Page 19, lines 12, 13.

THE spirit in which these maxims of Father Paul are written, may be sufficiently judged from the instructions which he gives for the management of the Venetian colonies and provinces. Of the former he says:—"Il faut les traiter comme des animaux féroces, les rogner les dents, et les griffes, les humilier souvent, surtout leur ôter les occasions de s'aguerrir. Du pain et le bâton, voilà ce qu'il leur faut; gardons l'humanité pour une meilleure occasion."

For the treatment of the provinces he advises thus:—"Tendre à dépouiller les villes de leurs privilèges, faire que les habitans s'appauvrissent, et que leurs biens soient achetés par les Vénitiens. Ceux qui, dans les conseils municipaux, se montreront ou plus audacieux ou plus dévoués aux intérêts de la population, il faut les perdre ou les gagner à quelque prix que ce soit : *enfin, s'il se trouve dans les provinces quelques chefs de parti, il faut les exterminer sous un prétexte quelconque, mais*

en évitant de recourir à la justice ordinaire. Que le poison fasse l'office du bourreau, cela est moins odieux et beaucoup plus profitable."

NOTE 2.

By the infamous statutes of the State Inquisition, etc.

Page 20, note 3.

M. Daru has given an abstract of these Statutes, from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque du Roi, and it is hardly credible that such a system of treachery and cruelty should ever have been established by any government, or submitted to, for an instant, by any people. Among various precautions against the intrigues of their own nobles, we find the following :—" Pour persuader aux étrangers qu'il était difficile et dangereux d'entretenir quelque intrigue secrète avec les nobles Vénitiens, on imagina de faire avertir mystérieusement le Nonce du Pape (afin que les autres ministres en fussent informés) que l'Inquisition avait autorisé les patriciens à poignarder quiconque essaierait de tenter leur fidélité. Mais craignant que les ambassadeurs ne prêtassent foi difficilement à une délibération, qui en effet n'existait pas, l'Inquisition voulait prouver qu'elle en était capable. Elle ordonna des recherches pour découvrir s'il n'y avait pas dans Venise quelque exilé au-dessus du commun, qui eût rompu son ban ; ensuite un des patriciens qui étaient aux gages du tribunal, reçut la mission d'assassiner ce malheureux, et l'ordre de s'en vanter, en disant qu'il s'était porté à cet acte, parce que ce banni était l'agent d'un ministre étranger, et avait cherché à le corrompre."—" Remarquons," adds M. Daru, " que ceci n'est pas une simple anecdote ; c'est une mission projetée, dé-

libérée, écrite d'avance ; une règle de conduite tracée par des hommes graves, à leurs successeurs, et consignée dans des statuts."

The cases, in which assassination is ordered by these statutes, are as follow :—

" Un ouvrier de l'arsenal, un chef de ce qu'on appelle parmi les marins le menstrance, passait-il au service d'une puissance étrangère, il fallait le faire assassiner, surtout si c'était un homme réputé brave et habile dans sa profession."—(*Art. 3, des Statuts.*)

" Avait-il commis quelque action qu'on ne jugeait pas à propos de punir juridiquement, on devait le faire empoisonner."—(*Art. 14.*)

" Un artisan passait-il à l'étranger en y exportant quelque procédé de l'industrie nationale : c'était encore un crime capital, que la loi inconnue ordonnait de punir par un assassinat."—(*Art. 26.*)

The facility with which they got rid of their Duke of Bedfords, Lord Fitzwilliams, etc. was admirable ; it was thus :—

" Le patricien qui se permettait le moindre propos contre le gouvernement, était admonété deux fois, et à la troisième *noyé comme incorrigible.*"—(*Art. 39.*)

NOTE 3.

Reflections on reading, etc.

Page 32, Extract VI.

The " Conjuraton de Nicolas Gabrini, dit de Rienzi," by the Jesuit de Cerceau, is chiefly taken from the much more authentic work of Fortifiocca on the same subject. Rienzi was the son of a laundress.

NOTE 4.

Their gilded gonfalons.

Page 34, first line.

“ Les gentilshommes conjurés portaient devant lui trois étendarts. Nicolas Guallato, surnommé *le bon di-seur*, portait le premier, qui était de couleur rouge, et plus grand que les autres. On y voyait des caractères d'or avec une femme assise sur deux lions, tenant d'une main le globe du monde, et de l'autre *une Palme* pour représenter la ville de Rome. C'était le Gonfalon de *la Liberté*. Le second, à fonds blanc, avec un St. Paul tenant de la droite *une Epée* nue et de la gauche la couronne de *Justice*, était porté par Étienne Magnacuccia, notaire apostolique. Dans le troisième, St. Pierre avait en main *les clefs* de la Concorde et de la Paix. Tout cela insinuait le dessein de Rienzi, qui était de rétablir la liberté, la justice, et la paix.”—DU CERCHEAU, liv. 2.

NOTE 5.

*That Ghost of Her,
The world's Imperial Mistress.*

Page 36, lines 12, 13.

This image is borrowed from Hobbes, whose words are, as near as I can recollect :—“ For what is the Papacy, but the Ghost of the old Roman Empire, sitting crowned on the grave thereof ?”

MISCELLANEOUS POËMS,

BY

**DIFFERENT MEMBERS OF THE POCO-CURANTE
SOCIETY.**

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE SYLPH'S BALL.

A SYLPH, as gay as ever sported
Her figure through the fields of air,
By an old swarthy Gnome was courted,
And, strange to say, he won the fair.

The annals of the oldest witch
A pair so sorted could not show—
But how refuse?—the Gnome was rich,
The Rothschild of the world below ;

And Sylphs, like other pretty creatures,
Learn from their mammas to consider
Love as an auctioneer of features,
Who knocks them down to the best bidder.

Home she was taken to his mine—
A palace, paved with diamonds all—
And, proud as Lady Gnome to shine,
Sent out her tickets for a ball.

The *lower* world, of course, was there,
And all the best ; but of the *upper*
The sprinkling was but shy and rare—
A few old Sylphids who loved supper.

As none yet knew the wondrous lamp
Of DAVY, that renown'd Aladdin,
And the Gnome's halls exhaled a damp,
Which accidents from fire were bad in ;

The chambers were supplied with light
By many strange, but safe devices :—
Large fire-flies, such as shine at night
Among the Orient's flowers and spices ;

Musical flint-mills—swiftly play'd
By elfin hands—that, flashing round,
Like some bright glancing minstrel maid,
Gave out, at once, both light and sound ;

Bologna-stones, that drink the sun ;
And water from that Indian sea,
Whose waves at night like wild-fire run,
Cork'd up in crystal carefully.

Glow-worms, that round the tiny dishes,
Like little light-houses, were set up ;
And pretty phosphorescent fishes,
That by their own gay light were eat up.

'Mong the few guests from Ether, came
That wicked Sylph, whom Love we call—
My Lady knew him but by name,
My Lord, her husband, not at all.

Some prudent Gnomes, 'tis said, apprized
That he was coming, and, no doubt
Alarm'd about his torch, advised
He should, by all means, be kept out.

But others disapproved this plan,
And, by his flame though somewhat frightened,
Thought Love too much a gentleman,
In such a dangerous place to light it.

However, *there* he was—and dancing
With the fair Sylph, light as a feather :
They look'd like two young sunbeams, glancing,
At daybreak, down to earth together.

And all had gone off safe and well,
But for that plaguy torch—whose light,
Though not yet kindled, who could tell
How soon, how devilishly it *might* ?

And so it chanced—which, in those dark
And fireless halls, was quite amazing;
Did we not know how small a spark
Can set the torch of Love a-blazing.

Whether it came, when close entangled
In the gay waltz, from her bright eyes,
Or from the *lucciole*, that spangled
Her locks of jet—is all surmise.

Certain it is, th' ethereal girl
Did drop a spark, at some odd turning,
Which, by the waltz's windy whirl,
Was fann'd up into actual burning.

Oh for that lamp's metallic gauze—
That curtain of protecting wire—
Which DAVY delicately draws
Around illicit, dangerous fire!—

The wall he sets 'twixt flame and air
(Like that which barr'd young Thisbe's bliss),
Through whose small holes this dangerous pair
May see each other but not kiss.*

At first the torch look'd rather bluely—
A sign, they say, that no good boded—
Then quick the gas became unruly,
And, crack! the ball-room all exploded.

Sylphs, Gnomes, and fiddlers, mix'd together,
With all their aunts, sons, cousins, nieces,
Like butterflies, in stormy weather,
Were blown—legs, wings, and tails—to pieces!

While, 'mid these victims of the torch,
The Sylph, alas! too, bore her part—

* ————— Partique dedère
Oscula quisque suæ, non pervenientia contrâ.—OVID.

Found lying, with a livid scorch,
As if from lightning, o'er her heart!

* * * * *

"Well done!" a laughing goblin said,
Escaping from this gaseous strife;
" 'Tis not the *first* time Love has made
" A *blow-up* in connubial life."

REMONSTRANCE.

After a conversation with L—d J—— R——,
in which he had intimated some idea of giving
up all political pursuits.

WHAT! *thou*, with thy genius, thy youth, and thy name—
Thou, born of a Russell—whose instinct to run
The accustom'd career of thy sires, is the same
As the eaglet's, to soar with his eyes on the sun!

Whose nobility comes to thee, stamp'd with a seal,
Far, far more ennobling than monarch e'er set;
With the blood of thy race offer'd up for the weal
Of a nation that swears by that martyrdom yet!

Shalt *thou* be faint-hearted and turn from the strife,
From the mighty arena where all that is grand,
And devoted, and pure, and adorning in life,
Is for high-thoughted spirits, like thine, to command?

Oh no, never dream it—while good men despair
Between tyrants and traitors, and timid men bow,
Never think, for an instant, thy country can spare
Such a light from her dark'ning horizon as thou!

With a spirit as meek as the gentlest of those
Who in life's sunny valley lie shelter'd and warm,
Yet bold and heroic as ever yet rose
To the top cliffs of Fortune, and breasted her storm;

With an ardour for liberty, fresh as, in youth,
It first kindles the bard and gives life to his lyre;
Yet mellow'd, even now, by that mildness of truth
Which tempers, but chills not, the patriot fire;

With an eloquence—not like those rills from a height,
Which sparkle, and foam, and in vapour are o'er;
But a current that works out its way into light
Through the filtering recesses of thought and of lore.

Thus gifted, thou never canst sleep in the shade ;
If the stirrings of genius, the music of fame,
And the charms of thy cause have not power to persuade,
Yet think how to freedom thou'rt pledged by thy name.

Like the boughs of that laurel, by Delphi's decree,
Set apart for the fane and its service divine,
All the branches that spring from the old Russell tree,
Are by Liberty *claim'd* for the use of her shrine.

EPITAPH ON A LAWYER.

HERE lies a lawyer—one whose mind
(Like that of all the lawyer kind)
Resembled, though so grave and stately,
The pupil of a cat's eye greatly ;
Which for the mousing deeds, transacted
In holes and corners, is well fitted,
But which, in sunshine, grows contracted,
As if 'twould—*rather* not admit it ;

As if, in short, a man would quite
Throw time away, who tried to let in a
Decent portion of God's light
On lawyer's mind or pussy's retina.

Hence, when he took to politics,
As a refreshing change of evil,
Unfit with grand affairs to mix
His little Nisi-Prius tricks,
Like imps at bo-peep, play'd the devil ;
And proved that when a small law wit
Of statesmanship attempts the trial,
'Tis like a player on the kit
Put all at once to a bass viol.

Nay, even when honest (which he could
Be, now and then), still quibbling daily,
He served his country as he would
A client thief at the Old Bailey.

But—do him justice—short and rare
His wish through honest paths to roam ;
Born with a taste for the unfair,
Where falsehood call'd, he still was there,
And when least honest most at home.

Thus, shuffling, bullying, lying, creeping,
He work'd his way up near the throne,
And, long before he took the keeping
Of the king's conscience, lost his own.

MY BIRTH-DAY.

“ My birth-day ! ” — What a different sound
That word had in my youthful ears !
And how, each time the day comes round,
Less and less white its mark appears !

When first our scanty years are told,
It seems like pastime to grow old ;
And, as Youth counts the shining links
That time around him binds so fast,
Pleased with the task, he little thinks
How hard that chain will press at last.

Vain was the man, and false as vain,
Who said * — “ were he ordain'd to run

* FONTENELLE. — “ Si je recommençais ma carrière, je ferais tout ce que j'ai fait.”

“ His long career of life again,
“ He would do all that he *had* done.”—
Ah ! 'tis not thus the voice that dwells
In sober birth-days speaks to me ;
Far otherwise—of time it tells
Lavish'd unwisely, carelessly—
Of counsel mock'd—of talents, made
Haply for high and pure designs,
But oft, like Israel's incense, laid
Upon unholy, earthly shrines—
Of nursing many a wrong desire—
Of wandering after Love too far,
And taking every meteor fire
That cross'd my path-way for his star !
All this it tells, and, could I trace
Th' imperfect picture o'er again,
With power to add, retouch, efface
The lights and shades, the joy and pain,
How little of the past would stay !
How quickly all should melt away—
All—but that freedom of the mind
Which hath been more than wealth to me ;
Those friendships, in my boyhood twined,
And kept till now unchangingly ;

And that dear home, that saving ark,
Where Love's true light at last I've found,
Cheering within, when all grows dark,
And comfortless, and stormy round!

FANCY.

THE more I've view'd this world, the more I've found
That, fill'd as 'tis with scenes and creatures rare,
Fancy commands, within her own bright round,
A world of scenes and creatures far more fair.
Nor is it that her power can call up there
A single charm that's not from Nature won,
No more than rainbows, in their pride, can wear
A single tint unborrow'd from the sun—
But 'tis the mental medium it shines through,
That lends to Beauty all its charm and hue;
As the same light, that o'er the level lake
One dull monotony of lustre flings,
Will, entering in the rounded rain-drop, make
Colours as gay as those on angels' wings!

LOVE AND HYMEN.

Love had a fever—ne'er could close
His little eyes till day was breaking ;
And whimsical enough, Heaven knows,
The things he raved about while waking.

To let him pine so were a sin—
One to whom all the world's a debtor—
So Doctor Hymen was call'd in,
And Love that night slept rather better.

Next day the case gave further hope yet,
Though still some ugly fever latent ;—
“ Dose, as before ”—a gentle opiate,
For which old Hymen has a patent.

After a month of daily call,
So fast the dose went on restoring,
That Love, who first ne'er slept at all,
Now took, the rogue ! to downright snoring.

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.

SWEET Sirmio ! thou, the very eye
Of all peninsulas and isles
That in our lakes of silver lie,
Or sleep, enwreathed by Neptune's smiles,

How gladly back to thee I fly !
Still doubting, asking *can* it be
That I have left Bithynia's sky,
And gaze in safety upon thee ?

Oh ! what is happier than to find
Our hearts at ease, our perils past ;
When, anxious long, the lighten'd mind
Lays down its load of care at last ?—

When, tired with toil on land and deep,
Again we tread the welcome floor
Of our own home, and sink to sleep
On the long-wish'd-for bed once more ?

This, this it is, that pays alone
The ills of all life's former track—

Shine out, my beautiful, my own
Sweet Sirmio—greet thy master back.

And thou, fair Lake, whose water quaffs
The light of Heaven, like Lydia's sea,
Rejoice, rejoice—let all that laughs
Abroad, at home, laugh out for me !

TO MY MOTHER.

Written in a Pocket-Book, 1822.

THEY tell us of an Indian tree
Which, howsoe'er the sun and sky
May tempt its boughs to wander free,
And shoot, and blossom, wide and high,
Far better loves to bend its arms
Downward again to that dear earth
From which the life, that fills and warms
Its grateful being, first had birth.

'Tis thus, though woo'd by flattering friends,
And fed with fame (*if* fame it be)
This heart, my own dear mother, bends,
With love's true instinct, back to thee !

ILLUSTRATION OF A BORE.

If ever you've seen a gay party,
Relieved from the pressure of NED—
How instantly joyous and hearty
They've grown when the damper was fled—
You may guess what a gay piece of work,
What delight to champagne it must be,
To get rid of its bore of a cork,
And come sparkling to you, love, and me!

A SPECULATION.

Of all speculations the market holds forth,
The best that I know for a lover of pelf
Is, to buy ***** up, at the price he is worth,
And then sell him at that which he sets on himself.

SCEPTICISM.

ERE Psyche drank the cup that shed
Immortal life into her soul,
Some evil spirit pour'd, 'tis said,
One drop of Doubt into the bowl—

Which, mingling darkly with the stream,
To Psyche's lips—she knew not why—
Made even that blessed nectar seem
As though its sweetness soon would die.

Oft, in the very arms of Love,
A chill came o'er her heart—a fear
That Death would, even yet, remove
Her spirit from that happy sphere.

“ Those sunny ringlets,” she exclaim'd,
Twining them round her snowy fingers—
“ That forehead, where a light, unnamed,
“ Unknown on earth, for ever lingers—

“ Those lips, through which I feel the breath
“ Of Heaven itself, whene'er they sever—

“ Oh! are they mine, beyond all death—

“ My own, hereafter and for ever?

“ Smile not—I know that starry brow;

“ Those ringlets and bright lips of thine,

“ Will always shine as they do now—

“ But shall *I* live to *see* them shine?”

In vain did Love say, “ Turn thine eyes

“ On all that sparkles round thee here—

“ Thou’rt now in Heaven, where nothing dies,

“ And in these arms—what *canst* thou fear?”

In vain—the fatal drop, that stole

Into that cup’s immortal treasure,

Had lodged its bitter near her soul,

And gave a tinge to every pleasure.

And, though there ne’er was rapture given

Like Psyche’s with that radiant boy,

Hers is the only face in Heaven.

That wears a cloud amid its joy.

FROM THE FRENCH.

Of all the men one meets about,
There's none like JACK—he's every where :
At church—park—auction—dinner—rout—
Go where and when you will, he's there.
Try the West End, he's at your back—
Meets you, like Eurus, in the East—
You're call'd upon for "How do, JACK?"
One hundred times a-day at least.
A friend of his one evening said,
As home he took his pensive way,
"Upon my soul, I fear JACK's dead—
"I've seen him but three times to-day!"

ROMANCE.

I HAVE a story of two lovers, fill'd
With all the pure romance, the blissful sadness,
And the sad, doubtful bliss, that ever thrill'd
Two young and longing hearts in that sweet
madness ;

But where to choose the *locale* of my vision

In this wide, vulgar world—what real spot
Can be found out, sufficiently elysian

For two such perfect lovers, I know not.
Oh, for some fair FORMOSA, such as he,
The young Jew,* fabled of, in the Indian Sea,
By nothing but its name of Beauty known,
And which Queen Fancy might make all her own,
Her fairy kingdom—take its people, lands,
And tenements into her own bright hands,
And make, at least, one earthly corner fit
For Love to live in—pure and exquisite!

A JOKE, VERSIFIED.

“COME, come,” said Tom’s father, “at your time of life,
“There’s no longer excuse for thus playing the rake—
“It is time you should think, boy, of taking a wife.”—
“Why, so it is, father,—whose wife shall I take?”

* Psalmanazar.

ON ———.

LIKE a snuffers, this loving old dame,
By a destiny, grievous enough,
Though so oft she has snapp'd at the flame,
Hath never caught more than the snuff.

FRAGMENT OF A CHARACTER.

HERE lies Factotum Ned at last :

Long as he breathed the vital air,
Nothing throughout all Europe pass'd
In which he had n't some small share.

Whoe'er was *in*, whoe'er was *out*—

Whatever statesmen did or said—
If not exactly brought about,
Was all, at least, contrived by Ned.

With NAP if Russia went to war,

'Twas owing, under Providence,
To certain hints Ned gave the Czar—
(*Vide* his pamphlet—price sixpence).

If France was beat at Waterloo—

As all, but Frenchmen, think she was—
To Ned, as WELLINGTON well knew,
Was owing half that day's applause.

Then, for his news—no envoy's bag

E'er pass'd so many secrets through it—
Scarcely a telegraph could wag
Its wooden finger but Ned knew it.

Such tales he had of foreign plots,

With foreign names, one's ear to buzz in—
From Russia, *chefs* and *ofs* in lots,
From Poland *owskis* by the dozen.

When GEORGE, alarm'd for England's creed,

Turn'd out the last Whig ministry,
And men ask'd—who advised the deed?
Ned modestly confess'd 'twas he.

For, though by some unlucky miss

He had not downright *seen* the King,
He sent such hints through Viscount *This*,
To Marquis *That*, as clench'd the thing.

The same it was in science, arts,
 The drama, books, MS. and printed—
 Kean learn'd from Ned his cleverest parts,
 And Scott's last work by him was hinted.

Childe Harold in the proofs he read,
 And, here and there, infused some soul in 't—
 Nay, Davy's lamp, till seen by Ned,
 Had—odd enough—a dangerous hole in 't.

'Twas thus, all-doing and all-knowing,
 Wit, statesman, boxer, chemist, singer,
 Whatever was the best pie going,
 In *that* Ned—trust him—had his finger.

* * * * *

COUNTRY-DANCE AND QUADRILLE.

ONE night, the nymph call'd COUNTRY-DANCE—
 Whom folks, of late, have used so ill,
 Preferring a coquette from France,
 A mincing thing, *Mamselle* QUADRILLE—

Having been chased from London down
To that last, humblest haunt of all
She used to grace—a country town—
Went smiling to the new-year's ball.

“ Here, here, at least,” she cried, “ though driven
“ From London’s gay and shining tracks—
“ Though, like a Peri cast from Heaven,
“ I’ve lost, for ever lost Almack’s—

“ Though not a London Miss alive
“ Would now for her acquaintance own me ;
“ And spinsters, even, of forty-five,
“ Upon their honours ne’er have known me :

“ Here, here, at least, I triumph still,
“ And—spite of some few dandy lancers,
“ Who vainly try to preach Quadrille—
“ See nought but *true-blue* country-dancers.

“ Here still I reign, and, fresh in charms,
“ My throne, like Magna Charta, raise,
“ ’Mong sturdy, free-born legs and arms,
“ That scorn the threaten’d *chaîne Anglaise*.”

'Twas thus she said, as, 'mid the din
Of footmen, and the town sedan,
She lighted at the King's-Head Inn,
And up the stairs triumphant ran.

The squires and their squiresses all,
With young squirinas, just *come out*,
And my lord's daughters from the Hall
(Quadrillers, in their hearts, no doubt),

Already, as she tripp'd up stairs,
She in the cloak-room saw assembling—
When, hark ! some new, outlandish airs,
From the first fiddle, set her trembling.

She stops—she listens—*can* it be ? .
Alas, in vain her ears would 'scape it—
It *is* “ *Di tanti palpiti*,”
As plain as English bow can scrape it.

“ Courage !” however—in she goes,
With her best, sweeping country grace ;
When, ah too true, her worst of foes,
QUADRILLE, there meets her, face to face.

Oh for the lyre, or violin,
Or kit of that gay Muse, Terpsichore,
To sing the rage these nymphs were in,
Their looks and language, airs and trickery!

There stood QUADRILLE, with cat-like face
(The *beau idéal* of French beauty),
A band-box thing, all art and lace
Down from her nose-tip to her shoe-tie.

Her flounces, fresh from *Victorine*—
From *Hippolyte*, her rouge and hair—
Her poetry, from *Lamartine*—
Her morals from—the Lord knows where.

And, when she danced—so slidingly,
So near the ground she plied her art,
You'd swear her mother-earth and she
Had made a compact ne'er to part.

Her face the while, demure, sedate,
No signs of life or motion showing,
Like a bright *pendule's* dial-plate—
So still, you'd hardly think 'twas *going*.

Full fronting her stood COUNTRY-DANCE—

A fresh, frank nymph, whom you would know
For English, at a single glance—

English all o'er, from top to toe.

A little *gauche*, 'tis fair to own,

And rather given to skips and bounces ;
Endangering thereby many a gown,
And playing oft the devil with flounces.

Unlike *Mamselle*—who would prefer

(As morally a lesser ill)

A thousand flaws in character,
To one vile rumple of a frill.

No rouge did she of Albion wear ;

Let her but run that two-heat race
She calls a *Set*—not Dian e'er
Came rosier from the woodland chase.

And such the nymph, whose soul had in 't

Such anger now—whose eyes of blue
(Eyes of that bright, victorious tint
Which English maids call "*Waterloo*")

Like summer lightnings, in the dusk
Of a warm evening, flashing broke,
While—to the tune of “Money Musk,” *
Which struck up now—she proudly spoke :—

“ Heard you that strain—that joyous strain .

“ ’Twas such as England loved to hear,

“ Ere thou, and all thy frippery train,

“ Corrupted both her foot and ear—

“ Ere WALTZ, that rake from foreign lands,

“ Presumed, in sight of all beholders,

“ To lay his rude, licentious hands

“ On virtuous English backs and shoulders—

“ Ere times and morals both grew bad,

“ And, yet unfleeced by funding blockheads,

“ Happy John Bull not only *had*,

“ But danced to, ‘ Money in both pockets.’ †

“ Alas, the change !—oh, —— !

“ Where is the land could ’scape disasters,

* An old English country-dance.

† Another old English country-dance.

- “ With *such* a Foreign Secretary,
“ Aided by foreign dancing-masters ?
- “ Woe to ye, men of ships and shops,
“ Rulers of day-books and of waves !
- “ Quadrill’d, on one side, into fops,
“ And drill’d, on t’ other, into slaves !
- “ Ye, too, ye lovely victims ! seen,
“ Like pigeons truss’d for exhibition,
- “ With elbows *à la crapaudine*,
“ And feet in—God knows what position.
- “ Hemm’d in by watchful *chaperons*,
“ Inspectors of your airs and graces,
- “ Who intercept all signal tones,
“ And read all telegraphic faces.
- “ Unable with the youth adored,
“ In that grim *cordon* of mammas,
- “ To interchange one loving word,
“ Though whisper’d but in *queue-de-chats*.
- “ Ah, did you know how bless’d we ranged,
“ Ere vile QUADRILLE usurp’d the fiddle—

“ What looks in *setting* were exchanged,
“ What tender words in *down the middle!*

“ How many a couple, like the wind,
“ Which nothing in its course controls,
“ Left time and *chaperons* far behind,
“ And gave a loose to legs and souls!

“ How matrimony throve—ere stopp’d
“ By this cold, silent, foot-coquetting—
“ How charmingly one’s partner popp’d
“ Th’ important question in *poussette-ing!*

“ While now, alas, no sly advances—
“ No marriage hints—all goes on badly:
“ Twixt Parson Malthus and French dances,
“ We girls are at a discount sadly.

“ Sir William Scott (now Baron Stowell)
“ Declares not half so much is made
“ By licences—and *he* must know well—
“ Since vile Quadrilling spoil’d the trade.”

She ceased—tears fell from every Miss—
She now had touch’d the true pathetic :—

One such authentic fact as this,
Is worth whole volumes theoretic.

Instant the cry was "COUNTRY-DANCE!"
And the maid saw, with brightening face,
The steward of the night advance,
And lead her to her birth-right place.

The fiddles, which awhile had ceased,
Now tuned again their summons sweet,
And, for one happy night, at least,
Old England's triumph was complete.

SONG

FOR THE POCO-CURANTE SOCIETY.*

To those we love we 've drank to-night ;
But now attend, and stare not,
While I the ampler list recite
Of those for whom—we care not.

* This song has been made a present of, by the Society, to Mr. Power, 34, Strand.

For royal men, howe'er they frown,
If on their fronts they bear not
That noblest gem that decks a crown—
The People's Love—*we care not.*

For slavish men who bend beneath
A despot yoke, and dare not
Pronounce the will, whose very breath
Would rend its links—*we care not.*

For priestly men who covet sway
And wealth, though they declare not;
Who point, like finger-posts, the way
They never go—*we care not.*

For martial men who on their sword,
Howe'er it conquers, wear not
The pledges of a soldier's word,
Redeem'd and pure—*we care not.*

For legal men who plead for wrong,
And, though to lies they swear not,
Are not more honest than the throng
Of those who *do*—*we care not.*

For courtly men who feed upon
The land like grubs, and spare not
The smallest leaf where they can sun
Their reptile limbs—*we care not.*

For wealthy men who keep their mines
In darkness hid, and share not
The paltry ore with him who pines
In honest want—*we care not.*

For prudent men who keep the power
Of Love aloof, and bare not
Their hearts in any guardless hour
To Beauty's shaft—*we care not.*

For secret men who, round the bowl
In friendship's circle, tear not
The cloudy curtain from their soul,
But draw it close—*we care not.*

For all, in short, on land and sea,
In court and camp, who *are* not,
Who never *were*, nor e'er will be
Good men and true—*we care not.*

GENIUS AND CRITICISM.

Scripsit quidem fata, sed sequitur.—SENECA.

Of old, the Sultan Genius reign'd—
As Nature meant—supreme, alone ;
With mind uncheck'd, and hands unchain'd,
His views, his conquests were his own.

But power like his, that digs its grave
With its own sceptre, could not last :
So Genius' self became the slave
Of laws that Genius' self had pass'd.

As Jove, who forged the chain of Fate,
Was, ever after, doom'd to wear it ;
His nods, his struggles, all too late—
“ *Qui semel jussit, semper paret.*”

To check young Genius' proud career,
The slaves, who now his throne invaded,
Made Criticism his Prime Vizir,
And from that hour his glories faded.

Tied down in Legislation's school,
Afraid of even his own ambition,
His very victories were by rule,
And he was great but by permission.

His most heroic deeds—the same
That dazzled, when spontaneous actions—
Now, done by law, seem'd cold and tame,
And shorn of all their first attractions.

If he but stirr'd to take the air,
Instant the Vizir's Council sat—
“ Good Lord ! your Highness can't go there—
“ Bless us ! your Highness can't do that.”

If, loving pomp, he chose to buy
Rich jewels for his diadem—
“ The taste was bad—the price was high—
“ A flower were simpler than a gem.”

To please them if he took to flowers—
“ What trifling, what unmeaning things !
“ Fit for a woman's toilette hours,
“ But not at all the style for Kings.”

If, fond of his domestic sphere,
He play'd no more the rambling comet—
“ A dull, good sort of man, 'twas clear,
“ But, as for great or brave—far from it.”

Did he then look o'er distant oceans,
For realms more worthy to enthrone him?—
“ Saint Aristotle, what wild notions!
“ Serve a ‘ *Ne exeat regno*’ on him.”

At length—their last and worst to do—
They round him placed a guard of watchmen—
Reviewers, knaves in brown, or blue
Turn'd up with yellow—chiefly Scotchmen—

To dog his footsteps all about,
Like those in Longwood's prison-grounds,
Who at Napoleon's heels rode out
For fear the Conqueror should break bounds.

Oh, for some champion of his power,
Some *ultra* spirit, to set free,
As erst in Shakespeare's sovereign hour,
The thunders of his royalty!—

To vindicate his ancient line, -
The first, the true, the only one
Of Right eternal and divine
That rules beneath the blessed sun!—

To crush the rebels, that would cloud
His triumphs with restraint or blame,
And, honouring even his faults, aloud
Re-echo "*Vive le Roi! quand même—*"



FABLES

FOR

THE * * * * *

————— Tu Regibus alas
Eripe. VIRGIL. *Georg.* lib. 4.

————— Clip the wings
Of these high-flying, arbitrary Kings.
DRYDEN'S Translation.

FABLES

FOR

THE * * * * *

FABLE I.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HOLY ALLIANCE.

A Dream.

I've had a dream that bodes no good
Unto the Holy Brotherhood.

I may be wrong, but I confess—

As far as it is right or lawful
For one, no conjuror, to guess—
It seems to me extremely awful.

Methought, upon the Neva's flood
A beautiful Ice Palace stood ;

A dome of frost-work, on the plan
Of that once built by Empress Anne,*
Which shone by moonlight—as the tale is—
Like an aurora borealis.

In this said palace—furnish'd all
And lighted as the best on land are—
I dream'd there was a splendid ball,
Given by the Emperor Alexander,
To entertain, with all due zeal,
Those holy gentlemen who've shown a
Regard so kind for Europe's weal,
At Troppau, Laybach, and Verona.

The thought was happy, and design'd
To hint how thus the human mind
May—like the stream imprison'd there—
Be check'd and chill'd till it can bear
The heaviest Kings, that ode or sonnet
E'er yet be-praised, to dance upon it.

* “It is well known that the Empress Anne built a palace of ice, on the Neva, in 1740, which was fifty-two feet in length, and when illuminated had a surprising effect.”—PINKERTON.

And all were pleased, and cold, and stately,
Shivering in grand illumination—
Admired the superstructure greatly,
Nor gave one thought to the foundation.
Much too the Czar himself exulted,
To all plebeian fears a stranger,
As Madame Krudener, when consulted,
Had pledged her word there was no danger.
So, on he caper'd, fearless quite,
Thinking himself extremely clever,
And waltz'd away with all his might,
As if the frost would last for ever.

Just fancy how a bard like me,
Who reverence monarchs, must have trembled,
To see that goodly company
At such a ticklish sport assembled.

Nor were the fears, that thus astounded
My loyal soul, at all unfounded;
For, lo! ere long, those walls so massy
Were seized with an ill-omen'd dripping,
And o'er the floors, now growing glassy,
Their Holinesses took to slipping.

The Czar, half through a Polonaise,
 Could scarce get on for downright stumbling,
And Prussia, though to slippery ways
 So used, was cursedly near tumbling.

Yet still 'twas *who* could stamp the floor most,
Russia and Austria 'mong the foremost.

And now, to an Italian air,

 This precious brace would hand in hand go;
Now—while old *****, from his chair,
Intreated them his toes to spare—
 Call'd loudly out for a fandango.

And a fandango, 'faith, they had,
At which they all set to like mad—
Never were Kings (though small th' expense is
Of wit among their Excellencies)
So out of all their princely senses.

But, ah! that dance—that Spanish dance—
 Scarce was the luckless strain begun,
When, glaring red—as 't were a glance
 Shot from an angry southern sun—

A light through all the chambers flamed,
Astonishing old Father Frost,
Who, bursting into tears, exclaim'd,
“ A thaw, by Jove!—we're lost, we're lost!
“ Run, F——! a second *Waterloo*
“ Is come to drown you—*sauve qui peut!*”

Why, why will monarchs caper so
In palaces without foundations?
Instantly all was in a flow:
Crowns, fiddles, sceptres, decorations;
Those royal arms, that look'd so nice,
Cut out in the resplendent ice;
Those eagles, handsomely provided
With double heads for double dealings—
How fast the globes and sceptres glided
Out of their claws on all the ceilings!
Proud Prussia's double bird of prey,
Tame as a spatch-cock, slunk away;
While—just like France herself, when she
Proclaims how great her naval skill is—
Poor ***** drowning *fleurs-de-lys*
Inagined themselves *water-lilies*.

And not alone rooms, ceilings, shelves,
But—still more fatal execution—
The Great Legitimates themselves
Seem'd in a state of dissolution.
Th' indignant Czar—when just about
To issue a sublime Ukase—
“Whereas, all light must be kept out”—
Dissolved to nothing in its blaze.
Next Prussia took his turn to melt,
And, while his lips illustrious felt
The influence of this southern air,
Some word like “Constitution,” long
Congeal'd in frosty silence there,
Came slowly thawing from his tongue.
While *****, lapsing by degrees,
And sighing out a faint adieu
To truffles, salmis, toasted cheese,
And smoking *fondus*, quickly grew
Himself into a *fondue* too ;—
Or, like that goodly King they make
Of sugar, for a twelfth-night cake,
When in some urchin's mouth, alas,
It melts into a shapeless mass !

In short, I scarce could count a minute
Ere the bright dome, and all within it—
Kings, Fiddlers, Emperors—all were gone !

And nothing now was seen or heard
But the bright river, rushing on,
Happy as an enfranchised bird,
And prouder of that natural ray,
Shining along its chainless way—
More proudly happy thus to glide
In simple grandeur to the sea,
Than when in sparkling fetters tied,
And deck'd with all that kingly pride
Could bring to light its slavery !

Such is my dream—and, I confess,
I tremble at its awfulness.
That Spanish dance—that southern beam—
But I say nothing—there's my dream—
And Madame Krudener, the she-prophet,
May make just what she pleases of it.

FABLE II.

THE LOOKING-GLASSES.

Proem.

WHERE Kings have been by mob-elections
 Raised to the throne, 'tis strange to see
 What different and what odd perfections
 Men have required in royalty.
 Some, liking monarchs large and plumpy,
 Have chosen their Sovereigns by the weight ;
 Some wish'd them tall ; some thought your dumpy
 Dutch-built the true Legitimate.*
 The Easterns, in a Prince, 'tis said,
 Prefer what's call'd a jolter-head ; †
 Th' Egyptians were n't at all partic'lar,
 So that their Kings had not red hair—
 This fault not even the greatest stickler
 For the blood-royal well could bear.

* The Goths had a law to choose always a short, thick man for their King.—MUNSTER, *Cosmog.* lib. iii. p. 164.

† "In a Prince, a jolter-head is invaluable."—*Oriental Field Sports.*

A thousand more such illustrations
Might be adduced from various nations ;
But, 'mong the many tales they tell us,
Touching th' acquired or natural right
Which some men have to rule their fellows,
There's one which I shall here recite :—

Fable.

There was a land—to *name* the place
Is neither now my wish nor duty—
Where reign'd a certain royal race,
By right of their superior beauty.

What was the cut legitimate
Of these great persons' chins and noses,
By right of which they ruled the state,
No history I have seen discloses.

But so it was—a settled case—
Some act of Parliament, pass'd snugly,
Had voted them a beauteous race,
And all their faithful subjects ugly.

As rank, indeed, stood high or low,
Some change it made in visual organs;
Your Peers were decent—Knights, so so—
But all your *common* people, gorgons!

Of course, if any knave but hinted
That the King's nose was turn'd awry,
Or that the Queen (God save us!) squinted—
The judges doom'd that knave to die.

But rarely things like this occur'd:
The people to their King were duteous,
And took it, on his royal word,
That they were frights and he was beauteous.

The cause whereof, among all classes,
Was simply this:—these island elves
Had never yet seen looking-glasses,
And, therefore, did not *know themselves*.

Sometimes, indeed, their neighbours' faces
Might strike them as more full of reason,
More fresh than those in certain places—
But, Lord! the very thought was treason!

Besides, howe'er we love our neighbour,
And take his face's part, 'tis known
We never half so earnest labour,
As when the face attack'd 's our own.

So, on they went—the crowd believing
(As crowds well govern'd always do);
Their rulers, too, themselves deceiving—
So old the joke they thought it true.

But jokes, we know, if they too far go,
Must have an end; and so, one day,
Upon that coast there was a cargo
Of looking-glasses cast away.

'Twas said, some Radicals, somewhere,
Had laid their wicked heads together,
And forced that ship to founder there—
While some believe it was the weather.

However this might be, the freight
Was landed without fees or duties;
And, from that hour, historians date
The downfall of the race of beauties.

The looking-glasses got about,
And grew so common through the land,
That scarce a tinker could walk out
Without a mirror in his hand.

Comparing faces, morning, noon,
And night, their constant occupation—
By dint of looking-glasses, soon
They grew a most reflecting nation.

In vain the Court, aware of errors
In all the old, establish'd mazards,
Prohibited the use of mirrors,
And tried to break them at all hazards :

In vain—their laws might just as well
Have been waste paper on the shelves ;
That fatal freight had broke the spell ;
People had look'd—and knew themselves.

If chance a Duke, of birth sublime,
Presumed upon his ancient face
(Some calf-head, ugly from all time),
They popp'd a mirror to his Grace—

Just hinting, by that gentle sign,
How little Nature holds it true,
That what is call'd an ancient line
Must be the line of Beauty too.

From Dukes' they pass'd to regal phizzes,
Compared them proudly with their own,
And cried, "How *could* such monstrous quizzes
"In Beauty's name usurp the throne?"—

They then wrote essays, pamphlets, books,
Upon cosmetical economy,
Which made the King try various looks,
But none improved his physiognomy.

And satires at the Court they levell'd,
And small lampoons, so full of slynesses,
That soon, in short, they quite be-devil'd
Their Majesties and Royal Highnesses.

At length—but here I drop the veil,
To spare some loyal folks' sensations :
Besides, what follows is the tale
Of all such late-enlighten'd nations ;

Of all to whom old Time discloses
A truth they should have sooner known—
That Kings have neither rights nor noses
A whit diviner than their own.

FABLE III.

THE FLY AND THE BULLOCK.

Proem.

OF all that, to the sage's survey,
This world presents of topsy-turvey,
There's nought so much disturbs his patience
As little minds in lofty stations.
'Tis like that sort of painful wonder
Which slight and pigmy columns, under
Enormous arches, give beholders;
Or those poor Caryatides,
Condemn'd to smile and stand at ease,
With a whole house upon their shoulders.

If, as in some few royal cases,
Small minds are *born* into such places—

If they are there, by Right Divine,
Or any such sufficient reason,
Why—Heaven forbid we should repine!—
To wish it otherwise were treason;
Nay, even to see it in a vision,
Would be what lawyers call *misprision*.

Sir ROBERT FILMER says—and he,
Of course, knew all about the matter—
“Both men and beasts love monarchy;”
Which proves how rational—the latter.
SIDNEY, indeed, we know, had quite
A different notion from the knight;
Nay, hints a King may lose his head
By slipping awkwardly his bridle:
But this is Jacobin, ill-bred,
And (now-a-days, when Kings are led
In patent snaffles) downright idle.

No, no—it is n't foolish Kings
(Those fix'd, inevitable things—
Bores paramount, by right of birth)
That move my wrath, but your pretenders,

Your mushroom rulers, sons of earth,
Who, not like t' others, *crown'd* offenders
(Regular *gratid Dei* blockheads,
Born with three kingdoms in their pockets),
Nor leaving, on the scale of mind,
These royal Zeros far behind,
Yet, with a brass that nothing stops,
Push up into the loftiest stations,
And, though too dull to manage shops,
Presume, the dolts, to manage nations !

This class it is that moves my gall,
And stirs up spleen, and bile, and all.
While other senseless things appear
To know the limits of their sphere—
While not a cow on earth romances
So much as to conceit she dances—
While the most jumping frog we know of,
Would scarce at Astley's hope to show off—
Your ****s, your ****s dare,
Pigmy as are their minds, to set them
To *any* business, *any* where,
At *any* time that fools will let them.

But leave we here these upstart things—
My business is, just now, with Kings ;
To whom, and to their right-line glory,
I dedicate the following story :—

Fable.

The wise men of Egypt were secret as dummies ;
And, even when they most condescended to teach,
They pack'd up their meaning, as they did their mummies,
In so many wrappers, 'twas out of one's reach.

They were also, good people, much given to Kings—
Fond of monarchs and crocodiles, monkeys and mystery,
Bats, hierophants, blue-bottle flies, and such things—
As will partly appear in this very short history.

A Scythian philosopher (nephew, they say,
To that other great traveller, young Anacharsis)
Stepp'd into a temple at Memphis one day,
To have a short peep at their mystical farces.

He saw a brisk blue-bottle Fly on an altar,*

Made much of, and worshipp'd as something divine ;
While a large, handsome Bullock, led there in a halter,
Before it lay stabb'd at the foot of the shrine.

Surprised at such doings, he whisper'd his teacher—

“ If 'tis n't impertinent, may I ask why
“ Should a Bullock, that useful and powerful creature,
“ Be thus offer'd up to a blue-bottle Fly?”

“ No wonder,” said t'other, “ you stare at the sight,

“ But *we* as a symbol of monarchy view it :
“ That Fly on the shrine is Legitimate Right,
“ And that Bullock the People that's sacrificed to it.”

* According to Ælian, it was in the island of Leucadia they practised this ceremony—*Seuiv pour rais mauvais.*—*De Animal.* lib. ii. cap. 8.

FABLE IV.

CHURCH AND STATE.

Proem.

“The moment any religion becomes national, or established, its purity must certainly be lost, because it is then impossible to keep it unconnected with men’s interests; and, if connected, it must inevitably be perverted by them.”—SOAME JENYNS.

THUS did SOAME JENYNS—though a Tory,
 A Lord of Trade and the Plantations—
 Feel how Religion’s simple glory
 Is stain’d by State associations.

When CATHERINE, after murdering Poles,
 Appeal’d to the benign Divinity,
 Then cut them up in protocols,
 Made fractions of their very souls—*
 All in the name of the bless’d Trinity;
 Or when her grandson, ALEXANDER,
 That mighty northern salamander,

* *Ames, demi-ames, etc.*

Whose icy touch, felt all about,
 Puts every fire of Freedom out—
 When he, too, winds up his Ukases
 With God and the Panagia's praises—
 When he, of royal saints the type,
 In holy water dips the sponge,
 With which, at one imperial wipe,
 He would all human rights expunge!
 When ***** (whom, as King and eater,
 Some name ***-****, and some *** *****)
 Calls down "Saint Louis' God" to witness
 The right, humanity, and fitness
 Of sending eighty thousand Solons—
 Sages with muskets and laced coats—
 To cram instruction, *no lens volens*,
 Down the poor struggling Spaniards' throats—
 I can't help thinking (though to Kings
 I must, of course, like other men, bow)
 That when a Christian monarch brings
 Religion's name to gloss these things—
 Such blasphemy out-Benbows Benbow!

 Or—not so far for facts to roam,
 Having a few much nearer home—

When we see churchmen, who, if ask'd,
" Must Ireland's slaves be tithed and task'd,
" And driven, like negroes or croats,
" That *you* may roll in wealth and bliss?"

Look from beneath their shovel hats

With all due pomp, and answer " Yes!"
But then, if question'd " Shall the brand
" Intolerance flings throughout that land,
" Betwixt her palaces and hovels,
" Suff'ring nor peace nor love to grow,
" Be ever quench'd?"—from the same shovels

Look grandly forth, and answer " No!"—
Alas, alas! have *these* a claim
To merciful Religion's name?

If more you want, go, see a bevy
Of bowing parsons at a levee
(Choosing your time, when straw's before
Some apoplectic bishop's door):
There, if thou can'st with life escape
That sweep of lawn, that press of crape,
Just watch their rev'rences and graces,
Should'ring their way on, at all risks,

And say—if those round, ample faces
To Heaven or earth most turn their disks?

This, this it is—Religion, made,
'Twixt Church and State, a truck, a trade—
This most ill-match'd, unholy *Co.*,
From whence the ills we witness flow—
The war of many creeds with one—
Th' extremes of *too* much faith, and none—
The qualms, the fumes of sect and sceptic,
And all that Reason, grown dyspeptic
By swallowing forced or noxious creeds,
From downright indigestion breeds;
Till, 'twixt old bigotry and new,
'Twixt Blasphemy and Cant—the two
Rank ills with which this age is cursed—
We can no more tell *which* is worst,
Than erst could Egypt, when so rich
In various plagues, determine which
She thought most pestilent and vile—
Her frogs, like Benbow and Carlile,
Croaking their native mud-notes loud,
Or her fat locusts, like a cloud
Of pluralists, obesely lowering,
At once benighting and devouring!

This—this it is—and here I pray
 Those sapient wits of the Reviews,
 Who make us poor, dull authors say,
 Not what we mean, but what they choose ;
 Who to our most abundant shares
 Of nonsense add still more of theirs,
 And are to poets just such evils
 As caterpillars find those flies *
 That, not content to sting like devils,
 Lay eggs upon their backs likewise—
 To guard against such foul deposits
 Of others' meanings in my rhymes
 (A thing more needful here because it's
 A subject ticklish in these times),
 I here to all such wits make known,
 Monthly and weekly, Whig and Tory,
 'Tis *this* Religion—this alone—
 I aim at in the following story :—

* “ The greatest number of the ichneumon tribe are seen settling upon the back of the caterpillar, and darting at different intervals their stings into its body—at every dart they depose an egg.”—GOLDSMITH.

Fable.

When Royalty was young and bold,
Ere, touch'd by Time, he had become—
If 'tis not civil to say *old*—
At least, a *ci-devant jeune homme*.

One evening, on some wild pursuit,
Driving along, he chanced to see
Religion, passing by on foot,
And took him in his *vis-à-vis*.

This said Religion was a friar,
The humblest and the best of men,
Who ne'er had notion or desire
Of riding in a coach till then.

“ I say”—quoth Royalty, who rather
Enjoy'd a masquerading joke—
“ I say, suppose, my good old father,
“ You lend me, for a while, your cloak.”

The friar consented—little knew
What tricks the youth had in his head ;

•

Besides, was rather tempted, too,
By a laced coat he got in stead.

Away ran Royalty, slap-dash;
Scampering like mad about the town ;
Broke windows—shiver'd lamps to smash,
And knock'd whole scores of watchmen down.

While nought could they, whose heads were
broke,
Learn of the “ why ” or the “ wherefore,”
Except that 'twas Religion's cloak
The gentleman, who crack'd them, wore.

Meanwhile, the friar, whose head was turn'd
By the laced coat, grew frisky too—
Look'd big—his former habits spurn'd—
And storm'd about as great men do—

Dealt much in pompous oaths and curses—
Said “ Damn you,” often, or as bad—
Laid claim to other people's purses—
In short, grew either knave or mad.

As work like this was unbefitting,
And flesh and blood no longer bore it,
The Court of Common Sense, then sitting,
Summon'd the culprits both before it.

Where, after hours in wrangling spent
(As courts must wrangle to decide well),
Religion to St. Luke's was sent,
And Royalty pack'd off to Bridewell :

With this proviso—Should they be
Restored in due time to their senses,
They both must give security,
In future, against such offences—

Religion ne'er to *lend his cloak*,
Seeing what dreadful work it leads to ;
And Royalty to crack his joke—
But *not* to crack poor people's heads, too.

FABLE V.

THE LITTLE GRAND LAMA.

Proem.

NOVELLA, a young Bolognese,
The daughter of a learn'd law doctor,*
Who had with all the subtleties
Of old and modern jurists stock'd her,
Was so exceeding fair, 'tis said,
And over hearts held such dominion;
That when her father, sick in bed,
Or busy, sent her, in his stead,
To lecture on the Code Justinian,
She had a curtain drawn before her,
Lest, if her charms were seen, the students
Should let their young eyes wander o'er her,
And quite forget their jurisprudence.†

* Andreas.

† Quand il étoit occupé d'aucune essoine, il envoyoit Novelle, sa fille, en son lieu lire aux escholes en charge, et, afin que la biauté d'elle n'empêchât la pensée des oyants, elle avoit une petite courtine devant elle.—CHRIST. de Pise, *Cité des Dames*, p. 11. chap. 36.

Just so it is with Truth—when *seen*,
Too fair and bright—'tis from behind
A light, thin allegoric screen,
She thus can safest teach mankind.

Fable.

In Thibet once there reign'd, we're told,
A little Lama, one year old—
Raised to the throne, that realm to bless,
Just when his little Holiness
Had cut—as near as can be reckon'd—
Some say his *first* tooth, some his *second*.
Chronologers and nurses vary,
Which proves historians should be wary.
We only know th' important truth—
His Majesty *had* cut a tooth.*

And much his subjects were enchanted,
As well all Lamas' subjects may be,

* See TURNER'S *Embassy to Thibet* for an account of his interview with the Lama.—“Teshoo Lama (he says) was at this time eighteen months old. Though he was unable to speak a word, he made the most expressive signs, and conducted himself with astonishing *dignity* and *decorum*.”

And would have given their heads, if wanted,
To make tee-totums for the baby.
As he was there by Right Divine
(What lawyers call *Jure Divino*,
Meaning a right to yours, and mine,
And every body's goods and rhino)—
Of course, his faithful subjects' purses
Were ready with their aids and succours—
Nothing was seen but pension'd nurses,
And the land groan'd with bibs and tuckers.

Oh! had there been a Hume or Bennet
Then sitting in the Thibet Senate,
Ye Gods, what room for long debates
Upon the Nursery Estimates!
What cutting down of swaddling-clothes
And pin-a-fores, in nightly battles!
What calls for papers, to expose
The waste of sugar-plums and rattles!
But no—if Thibet *had* M. P.'s,
They were far better bred than these;
Nor gave the slightest opposition,
During the Monarch's whole dentition.

But short this calm ; for, just when he
Had reach'd th' alarming age of three,
When royal natures—and, no doubt,
Those of *all* noble beasts—break out,
The Lama, who till then was quiet,
Show'd symptoms of a taste for riot ;
And, ripe for mischief, early, late,
Without regard for Church or State,
Made free with whosoe'er came nigh—

 Tweak'd the Lord Chancellor by the nose,
Turn'd all the Judges' wigs awry,

 And trod on the old Generals' toes—
Pelted the Bishops with hot buns,

 Rode cock-horse on the City maces,
And shot, from little devilish guns,

 Hard peas into his subjects' faces.
In short, such wicked pranks he play'd,

 And grew so mischievous (God bless him !)
That his chief Nurse—though with the aid
Of an Archbishop—was afraid,

 When in these moods, to comb or dress him ;
And even the persons most inclined

 For Kings, through thick and thin, to stickle,

Thought him (if they 'd but speak their mind,
Which they did *not*) an odious pickle.

At length, some patriot lords—a breed
Of animals they have in Thibet,
Extremely rare, and fit, indeed,
For folks like Pidcock to exhibit—
Some patriot lords, seeing the length
To which things went, combined their strength,
And penn'd a manly, plain, and free
Remonstrance to the Nursery ;
In which, protesting that they yielded
To none, that ever went before 'em,
In loyalty to him who wielded
Th' hereditary pap-spoon o'er 'em—
That, as for treason, 'twas a thing
That made them almost sick to think of—
That they and theirs stood by the King,
Throughout his measles and his chin-cough,
When others, thinking him consumptive,
Had ratted to the Heir Presumptive !—
But, still—though much admiring Kings
(And chiefly those in leading-strings)—

They saw, with shame and grief of soul,
There was no longer now the wise
And constitutional control
Of *birch* before their ruler's eyes;
But that, of late, such pranks, and tricks,
And freaks occur'd the whole day long,
As all, but men with bishopricks,
Allow'd, in even a King, were wrong—
Wherefore it was they humbly pray'd
That Honourable Nursery,
That such reforms be henceforth made,
As all good men desired to see ;—
In other words (lest they might seem
Too tedious) as the gentlest scheme
For putting all such pranks to rest,
And in its bud the mischief nipping—
They ventured humbly to suggest
His Majesty should have a whipping !

When this was read—no Congreve rocket,
Discharged into the Gallic trenches,
E'er equall'd the tremendous shock it
Produced upon the Nursery Benches.

The Bishops, who of course had votes,
By right of age and petticoats,
Were first and foremost in the fuss—

“What, whip a Lama!—Suffer birch
“To touch his sacred—infamous!
“Deistical!—assailing thus

“The fundamentals of the Church!
“No—no—such patriot plans as these
“ (So help them Heaven—and their sees!)
“They held to be rank blasphemies.”

The alarm thus given, by these and other
Grave ladies of the Nursery side,
Spread through the land, till, such a pothor,
Such party squabbles, far and wide,
Never in history's page had been
Recorded, as were then between
The Whippers and Non-whippers seen.
Till, things arriving at a state

Which gave some fears of revolution,
The patriot lords' advice, though late,
Was put at last in execution.
The Parliament of Thibet met—

The little Lama, call'd before it,
Did, then and there, his whipping get,
And (as the Nursery Gazette
Assures us) like a hero bore it.

And though, 'mong Thibet Tories, some
Lament that Royal Martyrdom
(Please to observe, the letter D
In this last word 's pronounced like B),
Yet to th' example of that Prince
So much is Thibet's land a debtor,
'Tis said, her little Lamas since
Have all behaved themselves *much* better.

FABLE VI.

THE EXTINGUISHERS.

Proem.

THOUGH soldiers are the true supports,
The natural allies of Courts,
Woe to the Monarch who depends
Too *much* on his red-coated friends;

For even soldiers sometimes think—

Nay, Colonels have been known to *reason*,—
And reasoners, whether clad in pink,
Or red, or blue, are on the brink
(Nine cases out of ten) of treason.

Not many soldiers, I believe, are

As fond of liberty as Mina ;
Else—woe to Kings, when Freedom's fever
Once turns into a *Scarletina* !
For then—but hold—'tis best to veil
My meaning in the following tale :—

Fable.

A lord of Persia, rich and great,
Just come into a large estate,
Was shock'd to find he had, for neighbours,
Close to his gate, some rascal Ghebers,
Whose fires, beneath his very nose
In heretic combustion rose.
But lords of Persia can, no doubt,
Do what they will—so, one fine morning,

He turn'd the rascal Ghebers out,
First giving a few kicks for warning.
Then, thanking Heaven most piously,
He knock'd their temple to the ground,
Blessing himself for joy to see
Such Pagan ruins strew'd around.
But much it vex'd my lord to find,
That, while all else obey'd his will,
The fire these Ghebers left behind—
Do what he would—kept burning still.
Fiercely he storm'd, as if his frown
Could scare the bright insurgent down ;
But, no—such fires are headstrong things,
And care not much for lords or kings.
Scarce could his lordship well contrive
The flashes in *one* place to smother,
Before—hey, presto—all alive,
They sprung up freshly in another.

At length when, spite of prayers and damns,
'Twas found the sturdy flame defied him,
His stewards came, with low *salams*,
Offering, by *contract*, to provide him

Some large Extinguishers (a plan
Much used, they said, at Ispahan,
Vienna, Petersburg—in short,
Wherever light 's forbid at court)—
Machines no lord should be without,
Which would, at once, put promptly out
Fires of all kinds—from staring stark
Volcanos to the tiniest spark—
Till all things slept as dull and dark
As, in a great lord's neighbourhood,
'Twas right and fitting all things should.

Accordingly, some large supplies
Of these Extinguishers were furnish'd .
(All of the true, imperial size),
And there, in rows, stood black and burnish'd,
Ready, where'er a gleam but shone
Of light or fire, to be clapp'd on.

But, ah ! how lordly wisdom errs,
In trusting to extinguishers !
One day, when he had left all sure
(At least *believed* so), dark, secure—

The flame, at all its exits, entries,
Obstructed to his heart's content,
And black extinguishers, like sentries,
Placed upon every dangerous vent—
Ye Gods! imagine his amaze,
His wrath, his rage, when, on returning,
He found not only the old blaze,
Brisk as before, crackling and burning—
Not only new, young conflagrations,
Popping up round in various stations—
But, still more awful, strange, and dire,
'Th' Extinguishers themselves on fire!! *
They, they—those trusty, blind machines
His lordship had so long been praising,
As, under Providence, the means
Of keeping down all lawless blazing,
Were now themselves—alas, too true
The shameful fact—turn'd blazers too,
And, by a change as odd as cruel,
Instead of dampers, served for fuel!

* The idea of this fable was caught from one of those brilliant *mots* which abound in the conversation of my friend, the author of the *Letters to Julia*—a production which contains some of the happiest specimens of playful poetry that have appeared in this or any age.

Thus, of his only hope bereft,
 “ What,” said the great man, “ must be done ?”
All that, in scrapes like this, is left
 To great men is—to cut and run.
So run he did ; while to their grounds
 The banish’d Ghebers bless’d return’d :
And, though their fire had broke its bounds,
 And all abroad now wildly burn’d,
Yet well could they, who loved the flame,
Its wandering, its excess reclaim ;
And soon another, fairer dome
Arose to be its sacred home,
Where, cherish’d, guarded, not confined,
The living glory dwelt inshrined,
And, shedding lustre, strong but even,
Though born of earth, grew worthy Heaven.

Moral.

The moral hence my Muse infers
Is—that such lords are simple elves,
In trusting to extinguishers
That are combustible themselves.

THE END.

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